

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION DRAFT
FOR Panel DISTRIBUTION

5.1 COMPONENT 1- STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

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5.1 COMPONENT 1- STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Stakeholder involvement forms the foundation for a continued, collaborative process of decision-making and action during Plan implementation. The Plan calls for active participation of a broad group of stakeholders as a key component to sustaining a successful, collaborative process during Plan implementation (Section 6.1).

Several methods to achieve broad stakeholder participation will be employed during the implementation of the Plan, including: 1) involving the public, 2) using advisory groups, 3) informing public agencies, stakeholders, and public schools, and 4) facilitating relationships. Each of these methods is discussed further below.

5.1.1 Involving the Public

The Water Agency and Panel will involve the public in Plan implementation. Involving the public includes regular communications about the Plan implementation, conducting outreach and education, and notifying the public on key issues and milestones. The Plan supports engaging the public in groundwater management and providing opportunities for individuals and groups for access to information and involvement at regular meetings to weigh in on implementation issues. The Water Agency and Panel will implement a public outreach plan with strategies for managing a web site and carrying out these activities with the aim of communicating with urban, rural, agricultural, business and environmental stakeholder audiences both within and outside the Santa Rosa Plain Watershed.

In 2010, the Agency created a website for the project:

<http://www.scwa.ca.gov/srgroundwater/>. The Water Agency will use its website to distribute information on Plan implementation activities to the public, and to ensure program information is readily accessible through the Internet.

Planned Actions:

1. Circulate copies and publish the adopted Plan and subsequent periodic reports on website.
2. Develop an informational insert on the Plan to accompany local agency water bills, and even potentially with water bills that are sent out by some of the mutual water companies.
3. Develop and execute a Public Outreach Plan for Plan implementation, which will help maximize outreach on implementation activities, and will encourage public attendance at key advisory meetings and workshops for input.
4. Develop outreach information that is comprehensible by public members with different levels of education and technical knowledge.
5. Conduct public forums at key milestones to encourage public participation.

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6. Maintain email and postal mail lists to announce meetings and keep interested parties informed about Plan implementation.
7. Invite interested parties to participate in Panel meetings.
8. Meet with representatives from interested organizations as appropriate and get feedback.
9. Coordinate meetings and conduct briefings with stakeholders within the SRPW to provide information and solicit feedback on the management responsibilities and activities relative to this Plan.

5.1.2 Advisory Groups

The Water Agency will seek and follow recommendations of the Panel in the implementation of the Plan as described in Section 6.1. Additionally, the Water Agency will continue to use a TAC on an as-needed basis for input regularly on technical aspects of Plan implementation.

Planned Actions:

1. Following Plan adoption, the current Panel will discuss and recommend the future composition of a new Panel and the Technical Advisory Committee to provide stakeholder input to Plan implementation.
2. Conduct quarterly meetings with the Panel to inform and seek guidance on implementation.
3. Conduct monthly TAC meetings as needed to obtain technical input on the various aspects of Plan implementation.
4. Maintain a high level of stakeholder involvement in Plan implementation by continuing to inform various stakeholder groups through briefings by Panel and TAC members

5.1.3 Informing Public Agencies and Stakeholders

The Water Agency and Panel will maintain good communication and foster further involvement with public agencies and stakeholders. Once implementation of the Plan begins, the Water Agency will be responsible for ensuring relevant public agencies and elected officials are informed on the activities conducted under the Plan.

Planned Actions:

1. Continue to maintain and further develop relationships with local, state and federal agencies and organizations to benefit Plan implementation while maintaining local control.
2. Meet with representatives from agencies as appropriate.
3. Coordinate and inform land use planning with surface water and groundwater management activities.
4. Conduct annual briefings with the elected officials who have adopted the Plan in conjunction with annual report.

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5. Provide information to increase public awareness of current and future water supplies, demands, and trends in reliability related to a changing climate.

5.1.4 Partnerships & Coordination

The Panel will facilitate partnerships and develop relationships at the local, state, and federal levels. Over the past decade, the SRPW area water users and other local leaders have made great strides in regional planning and collaboration on water issues. Several important partnerships have facilitated project implementation providing benefits to water agencies, their customers, and other groundwater users. For example, the Water Agency, City of Cotati, City of Sebastopol, City of Santa Rosa and Town of Windsor formed a cooperative partnership to fund the development of this Plan; and the same local agencies and the USGS conducted an assessment of SRPW groundwater resources (USGS, 2013) through a cooperative agreement.

Facilities necessary to implement and expand conjunctive use programs in the SRPW could help to achieve broader regional and statewide benefits. These facilities, however, would require substantial resources, and might best be pursued through partnerships with potential beneficiaries, and through seeking grant funding. Potential partners include California Department of Water Resources, State Water Resources Control Board, California Department of Public Health, and US Army Corps of Engineers.

Planned Actions:

1. Continue to promote partnerships that achieve both local supply reliability and broader regional and statewide benefits, including but not limited to proactively addressing potential water conflicts, helping to meet statewide goals and objectives in conservation and recycled water, and implementing total maximum daily loads (TMDLs).
2. Coordinate implementation activities and work to the extent practicable with watershed groups, local stewardship groups, water interest groups, and state and federal regulatory agencies that have jurisdiction in areas related to Plan activities.
3. Seek grant funding for Plan actions and coordinate grant funding efforts in the Plan area.